

**MULTI-FAMILY PROPERTIES (5+ units) AND ALL BUSINESSES**

must keep their recyclables **and organics** (food scraps and compostable paper) separate from the garbage.

**ENFORCEMENT EXPANDS January 1, 2015.**

ACWMA ORDINANCE 2012-01

**Attention Property Owners and Managers:**

The Mandatory Recycling Ordinance of the Alameda County Waste Management Authority (ACWMA) was implemented in two Phases:

**Phase 1** of the Mandatory Recycling Ordinance began July 1, 2012, requiring recycling at businesses and institutions that generate four or more cubic yards of garbage per week and multi-family properties with five or more units.

**Phase 2** of the Mandatory Recycling Ordinance began July 1, 2014 and added new requirements for separating food scraps and compostable paper. Phase 2 also expanded the Ordinance requirements to all businesses, regardless of garbage service level.

This letter is to notify you that, beginning January 1, 2015, ACWMA will actively enforce both phases of the Ordinance to ensure compliance. Enforcement activities will expand to include all businesses, regardless of garbage service level, as well as inspection for compliance with the new organics collection requirements at multi-family properties and all businesses. Violations could result in a citation and fine.

**FOLLOW THE LAW TO AVOID POSSIBLE CITATION AND FINE**

**Property owners and managers of multi-family properties with five or more units and commercial properties may be cited and possibly fined for the following violations:**

1. Failure to provide containers and collection service for organics (food scraps and compostable paper) of sufficient number, size and/or collection frequency to handle all of the organics generated at that location. This rule applies to all businesses that generate significant quantities of organics and all multi-family properties (5+ units).
2. Failure to provide containers and collection service for recyclables of sufficient number, size and/or collection frequency to handle all of the recyclables generated at that location. Materials that must be recycled include: cardboard, newspaper, white paper, mixed recyclable paper, recyclable glass food and beverage containers,

metal (aluminum and steel) food and beverage containers, PET (#1) and HDPE (#2) plastic bottles.

3. Failure to provide information at least annually to employees, tenants and contractors describing how to properly use the recycling, organics and garbage containers, as well as no later than 14 days after move-in and no less than 14 days prior to move-out.

**Businesses and institutions may also be cited, and possibly fined for:**

4. Disposing of recyclable materials in the garbage.
5. Disposing of garbage in the recycling or organics containers.
6. For businesses generating significant quantities of organics: disposing of food scraps and compostable paper in the garbage.

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## WHO MUST HAVE ORGANICS COLLECTION?

When we refer to “organics,” we are not talking about the pesticide-free produce you buy at the grocery store. Organics is a term used to describe materials such as food scraps, food-soiled paper and plant debris. These materials, when sent to a composting facility, will become compost—a valuable resource used by landscapers and farmers.

The Mandatory Recycling Ordinance requires “discarded food” and “compostable paper” to be kept separate from garbage and placed in a container for organics collection. Here are some examples of organic materials that now must be kept separate from the garbage:

- Food prep trimmings
- Spoiled or contaminated food
- Paper contaminated with food or oils such as pizza boxes and bakery boxes
- Paper that is wet
- Waxed corrugated produce boxes
- Paper plates, towels and napkins

As a reminder, separate organics collection service is required at:

- All multi-family properties with 5 or more units, and;
- Businesses that generate significant quantities of organics.

How much is “significant”? The ordinance prohibits the disposal of any food scraps or compostable paper in the garbage. However, as a rule of thumb, organics are considered “significant” when 10 or more gallons are disposed of in a garbage cart or 20 or more gallons of organics are disposed of in a garbage bin.

## SETTING-UP COLLECTION SERVICE

Contact your service provider(s) to set up recycling and/or organics collection service. Online resources, including contact information for your city’s service provider(s) are available at **[www.RecyclingRulesAC.org](http://www.RecyclingRulesAC.org)**. Online you will also find:

- Downloadable posters and signs—Click on your city under the “Rules by City” tab (this is also where you will find contact information for setting up collection service) to find posters specific to your city’s services, or go to the “Support Materials” section for generic posters and even a sign-maker tool.
- Template letters for compliance with the annual notification requirement.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES

Free site visits to identify specific opportunities to reduce waste, comply with the law and often save money on solid waste bills.

> **[www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/Request-Assistance](http://www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/Request-Assistance)**

Free indoor food scrap bins—A variety of containers and lids are available. Up to \$500 per approved business.

> **[www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/containers](http://www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/containers)**

Sign up at **[www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/Stay-Informed](http://www.RecyclingRulesAC.org/Stay-Informed)** to receive important updates, news and resources related to the recycling laws as they become available.